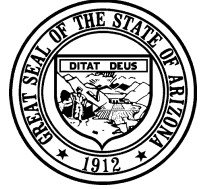


Arizona Department of Water Resources  
**GROUNDWATER USERS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
Tucson Active Management Area  
Kenneth Seasholes, Area Director



DEE T. O'NEILL  
Chair

DAVID MODEER  
Vice-Chair

JOHN MAWHINNEY

JON POST

CHUCK SWEET

**Minutes**  
**January 26, 2007**

**Members Present:**

Dee O'Neill, Chair  
John Mawhinney  
David Modeer  
Jon Post  
Chuck Sweet

**Tucson Staff Present:**

Kenneth Seasholes  
Mary Bauer  
John Bodenchuk  
Laura Grignano  
Virginia Welford

**Others:**

Larry Brickleman, AWET  
Janet Lea Carr, SAWUA  
Kathy Chavez, Pima Co. Regional Flood Control  
Dave Crockett, Flowing Wells Irrigation Dist.  
Mark Cross, E.L. Montgomery & Assoc.  
Nancy Freeman, Groundwater Awareness League  
Arturo Gabaldon, Community Water Co of G.V.  
Erick Holler, US Bureau of Reclamation  
Tim Hull, Green Valley News  
Holly Lachowicz, Ward 3  
Tina Lee, Ward 2  
Val Little, Water CASA  
Ann Meaders, Town of Marana Water  
Peter Ragan, AWET  
John Regan, Pima Co. Public Works  
Dennis Rule, Tucson Water  
Philip Saletta, Oro Valley Water Utility  
Staffan Schorr, E.L. Montgomery & Assoc.  
Alexis Schulman, Mass. Institute of Tech.  
Dave Seifert, League of Women Voters  
Ana Spitz, Arizona Water Institute  
Warren Tenney, Metro Water District  
Deborah Tosline, US Bureau of Reclamation  
Claire Zucker, PAG

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson, Dee O'Neill called the meeting to order at 10:30 a. m. Introductions were made.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Jon Post made a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2006. David Modeer seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. CAWCD's Planning for Recovery of Long-Term Storage Credits**

Chuck Cullom of CAP presented the Central Arizona Water Conservation District's (CAWCD) recovery plan of long-term storage credits. One type of recovery is Intentionally Created Unused Apportionment (ICUA), which is for recovery of interstate storage. Under the ICUA recovery plan the Arizona Water Banking Authority (AWBA) is obligated to store 1.2 maf for Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA). SNWA plans to recover its water between 2010-2041.

From 1992-1994 CAWCD stored 89 kaf for Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, paid in advance, and recovery of that water is expected to occur from 2007-2010. CAP's goal is to fulfill its recovery obligation to Southern California in advance of Southern Nevada's larger order. Water for interstate obligations is expected to initially come from 14 wells located at the Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation District and seven wells from Central Arizona Irrigation & Drainage District. Both facilities are located in Pinal County.

Another type of recovery is firming credits, which occurs when there is a Colorado River shortage. There are three categories of firming: 1) CAP Municipal & Industrial (M&I), 2) Priority 4 On-River and 3) Arizona Water Settlement Act (AWSA) Non-Indian Ag (NIA) water. CAP M&I firming is where CAP collects money through a 4-cent ad valorem tax and uses the funds to store water underground. In the event of a Colorado River shortage, the water will be recovered and delivered to CAP subcontract holders. The Priority 4 On-River contractors are equal to CAP in terms of priority, and the AWBA has stored approximately 400 kaf with money from the General Fund to protect these users from shortage. The AWBA is also working to provide firming of NIA CAP water that has been allocated to Indian communities pursuant to the AWSA. CAP's earliest timeline to recover firming water for these three categories is 2016, 2025 and 2016, respectively.

Firming water will be recovered by either direct recovery or credit exchange. Direct recovery water could possibly come from wells near CAP direct recharge facilities located in western Maricopa County and the Town of Marana area. A Pinal County well field that is independent of the irrigation districts is also being considered. Another alternative would be direct recovery from the Salt River Project (SRP) system.

There are a number of possible alternatives for credit exchange using CAP direct recharge facilities that are adjacent to or are within service areas that have CAP contracts. There has also been a substantial number of credits stored at Pinal and Maricopa County irrigation districts. In addition, the SRP system shareholders are evaluating the best way to recover credits to meet demands. All customers seek to achieve a hydrologic connection between water stored and the recovery of that water.

There has been an ongoing shortage sharing process of the seven basin states and the Secretary of Interior to address the fundamental question on how much shortage will occur and how it will be handled. When water levels at Lake Mead are low enough to trigger a shortage declaration, shortages will be shared by Mexico, Arizona and Nevada. The water

available to Arizona will first go to higher priority contractors. Once those priority customers are satisfied, the lower priority contractors share the remaining supply.

Based on the Bureau of Reclamation's model numbers, the earliest possible shortage will occur in 2011. However, this is based on very aggressive demand assumptions in the upper Colorado River basin. CAP's planning timeline for shortage is 2016; that is when they predict the probability of shortage will increase above 15%.

The Draft Recharge and Recovery Plan will be discussed at the May 2007 CAWCD Board meeting with hopes of adopting a final plan and implementation recommendations at its June 2007 meeting. If adopted, implementation will begin in 2008.

#### **4. Arivaca Watershed Educational Taskforce (AWET)**

Peter Ragan of AWET was invited to give an overview of the group's activities. AWET is a diverse volunteer organization created in 1977 as a result of a unified realization that the water resources in the Arivaca area - totally dependent on rainfall - were being substantially over allocated. Current estimates indicate that grandfathered water right pumpage in the area is twice as much as high estimates of aquifer recharge.

Use of existing grandfathered water rights, coupled with existing residential exempt wells pumping is substantially contributing to aquifer depletion in the area. It is estimated if all private property was subdivided to its lowest parcel size and each parcel equipped with a well, pumping could amount to almost 20 times the high estimates of recharge in the aquifer.

In an attempt to address the water situation, AWET is focusing on specific areas. Information gathering is one aspect that is taking place by measuring rainfall combined with an extensive well monitoring program, assisted with well equipment provided by the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). A detailed study is also being conducted on the hydrology of the area. Education through media and public meetings are being held to keep the community informed. Workshops on how to conserve and harvest water are being scheduled as well.

An effort to establish a program conservation easement is underway. This is an attempt to deter property owners from subdividing their land in order to reduce the number of wells in the long-term. A similar program is also being investigated to possibly retire grandfathered water rights.

AWET is advocating for the Refuge to acquire more property surrounding Arivaca Cienega and Arivaca Creek to address water level declines. The two groups are working with the AZ Game & Fish Department, the entity that manages the land, to look at the feasibility of releasing water from Arivaca Lake into the creek and cienega.

The National Wildlife Service is beginning a contaminant study in the Arivaca creek and cienega. This will establish baseline levels of contaminants so they can be monitored and measured in the event that releases occur from the lake, which is contaminated with mercury.

AWET is focused on staying in contact with ADWR and Pima County to keep them informed of the group's activities and to request assistance, when appropriate, in addressing Arivaca's water resource issues.

Next, Mr. Ragan quoted from a 2006 study released from the Pima Association of Governments:

“... Model results and data indicate that water levels have declined throughout the basin since the 1970s and streamflow in Arivaca Creek and water levels in the cienega are vulnerable to groundwater pumping, water diversions and drought. Groundwater pumping is currently capturing streamflow in Arivaca Creek and dewatering the basin. Additional groundwater development in the basin will likely continue to dewater the stream, the cienega, and the underlying aquifer...”

Although Arivaca is in the Tucson Active Management Area, and the AMA goal is to reach safe yield by 2025, Arivaca has an isolated aquifer and could legally and quickly become depleted. In the past, protective status had been sought for small mircobasins, and AWET would like the GUAC to consider supporting a protective status for Arivaca.

Kenneth Seasholes reminded the audience that sub-area management was an issue identified by the Safe Yield Taskforce that was formed in 2000 and is also identified in ADWR’s Third Management Plan future directions chapter.

Currently there is no legal mechanism for establishing a sub-area within an Active Management Area (AMA) with the exception of the Santa Cruz AMA, which is at safe yield and has a management goal to maintain this condition to prevent local water tables from experiencing long term declines.

There is a renewed interest to revisit the issue of sub-area management by possibly linking water resources to land use planning. This renewed interest of sub-area management, coupled with local control of water resources, is becoming a prominent topic throughout the state.

**5. Date and Agenda for Next Meeting**

The GUAC will be contacted to schedule the next meeting.

**6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.